

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently amended) An adhesive binding member for use in binding a stack of sheets, said binding member having reduced transverse curl and made in accordance with the following method:

providing a substrate having a length along a first axis and a width along a transverse axis normal to the first axis and a first pair of substrate edges parallel to the first axis and a second pair of substrate edges parallel to the transverse axis;

~~applying a layer of molten, heat-activated adhesive over an elongated surface region of the substrate, with the elongated surface region extending along the first axis, intermediate the parallel edges:~~ at least a majority of all a surface area of the substrate;

cooling the layer of molten adhesive so that the layer is in a solid state; and

subsequent to the cooling and prior to application of the binding member to a stack to be bound, mechanically deforming a surface of the layer of adhesive to a degree such that curling of the binding member along the transverse axis is substantially reduced, with the first and second pair of substrate edges being unconnected to any structure separate from the substrate by means other than the heat-activated adhesive.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently amended) The adhesive binding member of Claim 2 wherein the mechanically deforming includes applying multiple grooves to the surface of the layer of adhesive in a direction generally parallel to the first axis.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) An adhesive binding member for binding a stack of sheets comprising:

a substrate having a first axis disposed along a length of the substrate and a transverse axis normal to the first axis disposed along a width of the substrate; and

a layer of heat-activated adhesive disposed on a first surface of the substrate substantially along a full length of the substrate, having an exposed surface containing mechanical ~~deformities~~ deformations which were introduced into the adhesive when the adhesive was is in a cooled state and of a nature to substantially reduce curling of the binding member along the transverse axis.

7. (Currently amended) The adhesive binding member of Claim 6 wherein the mechanical ~~deformities~~ deformations include a multiplicity of grooves formed in the exposed surface.

8. (Currently amended) The adhesive binding member of Claim ~~7~~ wherein the ~~grooves extend at least 20% of the way through the total thickness of the adhesive layer~~ 6 wherein the substrate includes a first pair of substrate edges parallel to the first axis and a second pair of substrate edges parallel to the transverse axis, with the first and second pair of substrate edges being unconnected to any structure separate from the substrate by means other than the heat-activated adhesive and wherein at least a majority of the first surface of the substrate is covered by the heat-activated adhesive.

9. (Currently amended) The adhesive binding member of Claim ~~[[8]]~~ 7 wherein the grooves are disposed in directions substantially parallel to the first axis.

10. (Currently amended) The adhesive binding member of Claim 6 wherein the mechanical ~~deformities~~ deformations include a multiplicity of punctures in the exposed surface.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) A binding member ~~applied to a stack of sheets using a binding machine and~~ formed in accordance with the following method comprising:

providing a substrate having a first axis and transverse axis normal to the first axis, with said substrate including an elongated adhesive receiving surface having a surface length along the first axis greater than a surface width along the transverse axis, with the adhesive receiving surface being entirely substantially smooth and with a substrate surface directly opposite the adhesive receiving surface being entirely substantially smooth;

applying a layer of molten, heated-activated adhesive over ~~a substantially a full length of the substrate along the first axis~~ substantially all of the elongated adhesive receiving surface of the substrate;

cooling the layer of molten adhesive so that the adhesive layer is in a solid state; and

subsequent to the cooling, mechanically deforming an exposed surface of the adhesive layer ~~to an extent such that curling of the substrate along the transverse axis is substantially reduced, thereby forming a binding member; and~~

~~subsequent to the mechanically deforming, applying the binding member to an edge of a stack of sheets~~ in regions of the adhesive surface directly opposite the elongated adhesive receiving surface, with the deforming being carried out so that essentially none of the adhesive is removed.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently amended) A binder strip having reduced transverse curl and made in accordance with the following method comprising:

providing a substrate having a first axis and transverse axis normal to the first axis and including a first pair of substrate edges parallel to the first axis and a second pair of substrate edges parallel to the transverse axis;

applying a layer of molten, heated-activated adhesive over at least a majority of a surface of the substrate along the longitudinal axis;

cooling the layer of molten adhesive so that the adhesive layer is in a solid state; and

subsequent to the cooling, forming a multiplicity of grooves in an exposed surface of the adhesive layer;

with the binder strip including a pair of opposing binder strip edges parallel to the longitudinal axis with the binder strip edges first and second pairs of substrate edges being unconnected to any structure separate from the binder strip substrate by means other than the heat-activated adhesive.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently amended) An adhesive binder strip for binding a stack of sheets comprising:

an elongated substrate having a length along a longitudinal axis and which is greater than a substrate width along a transverse axis normal to the longitudinal axis; and

a layer of heat-activated adhesive disposed on a surface of the substrate and extending substantially a full length of the substrate along the longitudinal axis , with the layer having a multiplicity of grooves formed in an exposed surface of the adhesive which extend at least 20% of the way through a thickness of the layer of adhesive and wherein the elongated substrate includes a pair of opposing substrate edges parallel to the longitudinal axis with the substrate edges being unconnected to any structure separate from the substrate by means other than the heat-activated

adhesive, with the adhesive covering at least a majority of all of the surface of the substrate.

20. (Currently amended) An adhesive binding member ~~for binding an edge of a stack and having reduced transverse curl, said binding member made in accordance with the following method comprising:~~

providing a substrate having an elongated region for receiving an adhesive, said elongated region having a length sufficient to extend a full length of the edge of a stack bound by the binding member and a region width smaller than the region length, with said elongated region having a longitudinal axis and a transverse axis normal to the longitudinal axis; and

~~applying a layer of molten,~~ heated-activated adhesive disposed over substantially all of the elongated region of the substrate ;

~~cooling the layer of molten adhesive so that the layer is in a solid state; and~~
subsequent to the cooling and prior to application of the binder member to a stack to be bound, mechanically deforming a surface of the layer of adhesive to with the adhesive layer including a multiplicity of grooves formed in an exposed surface of the adhesive when the adhesive was in a molten form, with a location and depth of such grooves being of a degree such that curling of the binder member along the transverse axis is substantially reduced.

21. (Currently amended) The adhesive binding member of Claim 20 wherein the mechanically deforming includes applying multiple grooves to the surface of the layer of adhesive all substrate surfaces directly opposite the grooves in the adhesive are substantially smooth surfaces.

22. (Currently Amended) An adhesive binding member for binding an edge of a stack of sheets comprising:

a substrate having an elongated region for receiving an adhesive on a first substrate surface, said elongated region having a length along a longitudinal axis and a width along a transverse axis normal to the elongated axis, with the elongated region extending along substantially a full length of the edge of the stack after binding and with the elongated region length being greater than the region width; and

a layer of heat-activated adhesive disposed over substantially all of the elongated region and no other region of the substrate, with the layer having an exposed surface containing mechanical ~~deformities~~ deformations introduced when the adhesive was in a molten form, with the mechanical deformations being of a nature to substantially reduce curling of the binding member along the transverse axis, wherein the first surface of the substrate and a second surface of the substrate opposite the first surface are both substantially smooth in all of the substrate surface regions directly opposite the mechanical ~~deformities~~ deformations in the adhesive.

23. (Currently amended) The adhesive binding member of Claim 22 wherein the mechanical ~~deformities~~ deformations include a multiplicity of grooves formed in the exposed surface.

24. (Previously presented) The adhesive binding member of Claim 23 wherein the grooves extend at least 20% of the way through the total thickness of the adhesive layer.

25. (Previously presented) The adhesive binding member of Claim 24 wherein the grooves are disposed in directions substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis.

26. (Currently amended) The adhesive binder strip of Claim 22 wherein the mechanical ~~deformities~~ deformations include a multiplicity of punctures in the exposed surface.

27. (Currently amended) The adhesive binding member of Claim 2 wherein a second ~~first~~ surface of the substrate ~~, opposite the elongated surface on which the adhesive is disposed~~ and a second surface of the substrate opposite the first surface, are both substantially entirely smooth substrate surfaces in all surface regions opposite deformations introduced into the adhesive during the mechanically deforming.

28. (Currently amended) The binder strip of Claim 6 wherein the second surface of the substrate along with the first surface of the substrate are both substantially entirely smooth in all of the substrate surface regions directly opposite the mechanical ~~deformities~~ deformations in the adhesive.

29. (Currently amended) The binder strip of Claim ~~[[6]]~~ 8 wherein the binding member is a binder strip and wherein the substrate is an elongated substrate with the length being greater than the width ~~, with the first axis being a longitudinal axis of the elongated substrate and wherein the elongated substrate includes two opposite substrate edges parallel to the longitudinal axis, with the substrate edges being unconnected to any structure separate from the substrate by means other than the heat activated adhesive.~~

30. (Currently amended) The binder strip of Claim 19 wherein the adhesive is disposed on a first surface of the substrate and wherein a second surface of the substrate, opposite the first surface, along with the first surface are both substantially entirely smooth in ~~at least some~~ all of the substrate surface regions that are directly opposite the grooves in the adhesive.

31. (Currently amended) The binder strip of Claim ~~[[30]]~~ 19 wherein ~~both the surfaces of the substrate are substantially smooth in all of the surface regions~~

~~opposite the adhesive~~ the grooves are formed in the adhesive after the adhesive has been applied to the substrate in molten form and cooled.

32. (Previously presented) The adhesive binding member of Claim 31 wherein the grooves are disposed in directions substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis.

33. (Currently amended) The adhesive binding member of Claim 22 wherein the binding member is a binder strip and wherein the substrate is an elongated substrate, ~~with the first axis being a longitudinal axis of the elongated substrate~~ having a length along the longitudinal axis which is greater than a width normal to the longitudinal axis and wherein the elongated substrate includes two opposite substrate edges parallel to the longitudinal axis, with the substrate edges being unconnected to any structure separate from the substrate by means other than the heat-activated adhesive.

34. (Currently amended) The binder strip of Claim 33 wherein ~~both the first and second surfaces of the substrate are substantially smooth in all of the surface regions opposite the adhesive~~ at least a majority of the first surface of the substrate is covered with the heat-activated adhesive.

35. (Currently amended) The binder strip of Claim 29 wherein the first substrate surface and a second surface of the substrate, opposite the first substrate surface, are both substantially entirely smooth in all of surface regions directly opposite the mechanical deformations in the adhesive.

36. (Currently amended) The binder strip of Claim 2 wherein the mechanically deforming is carried out ~~without removal of a significant amount~~ so that essentially none of the adhesive is removed.

37. (Currently amended) The binder strip of Claim 14 wherein the forming a multiplicity of grooves is carried out ~~without removal of a significant amount~~ so that essentially none of the adhesive is removed.

38. (Currently amended) The binder strip of Claim 20 wherein the mechanically deforming is carried out ~~without removal of a significant amount~~ so that essentially none of the adhesive is removed.

Please add the following new claim:

39. (Newly presented) The binding member of Claim 12 wherein the mechanical deformations are such that curling of the substrate along the transverse axis is substantially reduced.